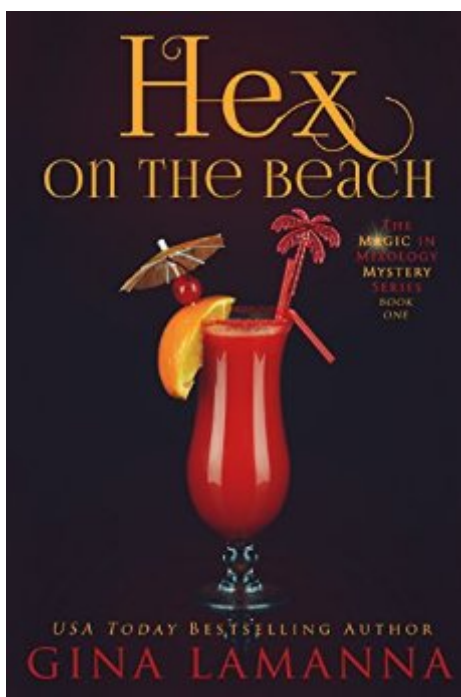


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Hex On The Beach (The Magic & Mixology Mystery Series Book 1)



Synopsis

Welcome to The Isle... Lily Locke has never believed in witches and wizards, ghosts and magic, shifters and vampires—especially cute blonde vamps with blood-intolerance issues. A rising star at a hotshot marketing agency in Minneapolis, Minnesota, all Lily knows is that she's a PowerPoint guru, an Excel ninja, and a coffee-maker extraordinaire. Not to mention she's next in line for a huge promotion. All that changes when Lily's assistant delivers a strange quiz to her, one titled A Magical Assessment for Normal Folks. With it comes the promise of a land she's never known existed. A land where Lily not only discovers her biological family for the first time, but a place where she can make a difference, change lives, and step into the role she's destined to fulfill. But first, Lily must admit she's a witch. Then, she has to acknowledge that the tall, dark, and mysterious man who offers his help is strictly focused on business...at least, for now. When a body turns up dead and the next target is Lily, she must trust her powers and accept the help of her newfound friends. Otherwise, she'll never survive the trials of the magical island tucked far, far away in the frigid waters of Lake Superior. Welcome to The Isle.

**** ****This novel is a full-length, humorous cozy mystery featuring a splash of magic, a handful of witches, and a dash of romance. It's rated PG-13 due to mild language and some romance.

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Customer Reviews

This is marketed as a combination of Harry Potter and Stephanie Plum. I can tell the author read both series, because she straight up "borrowed" elements from both. The one that bothered me the most was the grandmother, whose sassy attitude, colorful track suits, and blue hair were lifted straight from Stephanie Plum with no originality or creativity whatsoever. The dialogue is tedious throughout the book. Characters spend entire chapters discussing whether they are going to talk about something. Don't get attached to any of the characters in the first part of the book (the friendly bartender or the kooky secretary), because they disappear entirely. The main character's father is literally described as cardboard, which is convenient as it entirely avoids creating a three dimensional character or any backstory. And shhh, we can't talk about her mother, because mumble mumble curse mumble mumble nope can't talk about it. Other reviews have covered the immature characterizations, the derivative Ranger character (borrowed down to the name from Stephanie Plum), the logical inconsistencies, and the plot holes, so I'll stop here. On the positive side, the grammar and spelling was excellent. Props to the copy editor. Overall, not recommended.

This is definitely a slow start to a new series. Lily is excited and nervous about her marketing presentation to a major new account and has over prepared for it. Then, everything goes terribly wrong. Instead of closing the deal and getting a promotion, she's fired and ends up at the local bar to drown her sorrows. In come two strange women who tell her that she's their niece, magic is real and that she's needed desperately at the Isle, a magical island. She's a Magical Mixologist and the last one has died (there can be only one). There's a lot of imagination in this story. The world building is great. The idea of a Magical Mixologist is clever. Unfortunately, the story suffers from a lot of flaws. First of all, Lily and her two cousins (main characters) are supposed to be in their late twenties. The cousins behave like 13 year old kids. Lily is supposed to be a successful career oriented woman but comes across as a very young, immature and uncertain college student. The rest of the characters are cookie cutter stereotypes (the nasty dark wizard, the sufer dude, the mysterious handsome man, the annoyed old person). Also, this is billed as a mystery and I really don't know why. The "mystery" isn't the main theme of the story at all. There are a large number of subplots appearing mainly as hints. For example, there is a "curse" which every time it is mentioned, everyone says that they won't talk about it or it will be explained later. Hopefully,

the next installment will have more plot and less hints.

I have no idea how this book got the rating it has. It's badly written, plot threads dropped left and right, like the author got bored mid way through and thought, oh nobody'll notice that giant plot hole, except it happens all through the book. The book could be a really great story, except it's mostly filled with tittle asinine wanna be sassy dialogue. I think the author took what should have been one book and tried to make a series except the substance is spread way too thin. I had such a hard time reading this one I won't bother with the rest. Extremely ill thought out and unintelligent. Shame.

Picked it up because of the comparison to Harry Potter. The only similarity is that they both include magic. It doesn't have the depth that the Harry Potter series did. Also didn't have the charm of the Stephanie Plum series. I would probably liked it more if the email description hadn't set my expectations so high. But then again - it did get me to buy the book.

Admittedly I do not review every book I read, especially I tend to read light, paranormal romance/mystery. They are often very similar. Also I don't always like the first book in a series as it is often just there to "set-up" the characters and back story. I felt this one was different while still staying in the light paranormal mystery vein. Of course there is the young lady of 26 who has really put a lot into her career--more than some people considerably older than she. The pay has not been great up to this point but all those late nights and promotions are, she believes, going to pay off very soon. She was apparently well raised by her father but in the words of author Gina LaManna, "he has all the emotions of a turtle". There is no other family and there is no romantic interest who will come "rescue" her from this very stressful, all consuming, job. She fully depends on herself. Of course the life changing "presentation" she has to make for her job in marketing, blows up in her face and gets her fired. She is sure she is having a breakdown. Her Aunts who are witches, show up to take her away to an island where paranormals live and where she is expected to be a "Mixologist" In other books she might have been called a healer, or potion maker but not in this one. And that is just one of the surprises. Each character has his or her own personality and view of life. In this magical place, some nice looking things can be poisonous, and each herb and flower has its exact purpose--which she must learn from "Gus", a Mixologist assistant. The author doesn't come close to revealing all in this first book. While I like that very much, there are a few times the reader is a bit confused by the events. These periods are short and as the book evolves begin to make more sense. A great quick read.

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